



Detail of a pastel portrait (1783) by Joseph-Siffrède Duplessis; New York Public Library (Bettmann Archive)

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

**Franklin Served His Nation as a Statesman, Scientist, and Public Leader.**

**FRANKLIN, BENJAMIN** (1706-1790), was a jack-of-all-trades and master of many. No other American, except possibly Thomas Jefferson, has done so many things so well. During his long and useful life, Franklin concerned himself with such different matters as statesmanship and soapmaking, book-printing and cabbage-growing, and the rise of tides and the fall of empires. He also invented an efficient heating stove and proved that lightning is electricity.

As a statesman, Franklin stood in the front rank of the men who built the United States. He was the only man who signed all four of these key documents in American history: the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, and the Constitution of the United States.